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Georg Schmidt

Werner Schmalenbach

Peter Bachlin

Layout Hermann Eidenbenz

English version Hugo Weber and Roger Manvell

THE FILM

Its Economic, Social, and Artistic Problems

THE FALCON PRESS LONDON

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FOREWORD

This book is the result of an exhibition "The Film Yesterday and Today" shown in 1943 during the first Basle FilmWeek ("Ten Days of Film in Basle"), in the Gewerbemuseum in Basle, in 1944 in the Gewerbemuseum in Berne, in 1945 in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Zurich, in 1947 at the Film Festival in Brussels and in 1948 in Amsterdam.

The exhibition was arranged in three parts. In the first part there were 64 panels on the economic, social and artistic problems of the fiction film and its various interrelations. In the second part the educational film and the amateur film (the sub-standard film) were treated. In the third part photographic and projection equipment was shown. The exhibition was accompanied by detailed commentary in a catalogue.

The desirability of making the first part of the exhibition and its accompanying text available in the form of a book was frequently suggested, because it summarized in a new form the significance of the economic, social and artistic problems of the film.

Thanks to the initiative of the Holbein Publishing Company and a generous grant from the Government of Basle it was possible to realize this suggestion. The Commission of the Swiss Film Archive in Basle, with whom the original panels had been deposited, agreed to act as editor.

This book is more than a copy of the panels of the exhibition and the accompanying text in the exhibition catalogue. All the panels were completely revised in content and expression. Many of the pictures were replaced by better examples and more were added. The text on the left accompanying the plates in the book was essentially changed from the exhibition catalogue. The pictures on the left side were newly added. Finally, the readjustment to book size of the large, poster-like layouts, designed to be seen from a distance, required a more careful formulation of the material.

Next, a word concerning the division of the work among the authors. The systematic conception of the original exhibition and therefore also of the book

was prepared by Georg Schmidt. The presentation of the artistic problems of the film was devised by Werner Schmalenbach. Peter Bachlin placed at our disposal the statistical material for the presentation of the economic problems of the film. Werner Schmalenbach selected the pictures. The typographic design of the plates, which is closely related to the contents, was prepared by Hermann Eidenbenz. In spite of this separation of labour, every plate is the result of careful collaboration.

Finally, something should be said concerning the layout of the book.

In spite of its brief career of scarcely half a century, the film has already shown a remarkable historical development, technically, economically, socially and artistically. On the other hand, it is, in its present state, an extremely variable phenomenon in its different spheres, production methods and economic structure.

There are, therefore, two possible methods for the presentation of the subject of the film. First, one can show it in historical cross-section, that is, how it arose, developed and expanded. Or alternatively it can be shown by means of a cross-section of its present state, indicating what its present function is, what its technical and artistic means are, and what is the nature of its economic and social structure.

In the face of the extraordinary complexity of the film as it is today, we have chosen the latter method of demonstration, the cross-section analysis of the film in its present state. This method of presentation has the following advantage: the average film-goer sees only the finished product, he knows very little of the technical, economical, social and artistic influences which condition the nature of the product. To give him this knowledge, to make him aware of these conditions — this seems to us the most essential function of the book.

For this reason, the nature of the book as a presentation of the entire creative process of the film from production to consumption arose quite naturally: the economic basis of the film (financing), its means of artistic production (scenario, direction, acting, decoration, and general technique), the distribution of the finished film (by sale and rental), its presentation in motion picture theatres, and finally the place of the film-goer.

But since the present situation of the film cannot be really understood in any of its parts without having insight into its historical growth, some historical considerations are incorporated in their proper place in the general cross-section: the development of the economic foundations of the film, from its beginning up to the present time, the development of its different artistic techniques, and the development of distribution and exhibition.

This makes it possible to elucidate something else of importance. The film reveals not only its own development, it appears at a very definite moment in the general development of human culture. Its appearance is not accidental but fulfils a historical need, equally from the technical, social and artistic points of view. The film cannot be isolated from the history of economics and from the history of society; it occupies a very definite place in economic and social development. And in addition, it plays a definite part in the history of the theatre, painting, literature and music.

To know all this is indispensable for a real understanding of what the film is today and what it could be in the future. Some historical analysis included in the general cross-section helps to clarify this.

Of the manifold types of contemporary films — among them the fiction film, the documentary film, the newsreel, the advertising film and the amateur film — only the fiction film is treated in this book. This is because the fiction film is undoubtedly the most influential, and also because the cultural problems of the film appear most obviously in the fiction film.

It was harder for us to omit discussion of film technique. The nature of the fiction film particularly is determined to a significant degree by its technique. Our attitude concerning the technical aspect of the fiction film has been adopted in a purely arbitrary way, on one plate only. However, there are enough occasions to mention this technical aspect of the various problems of the film when dealing with them. A detailed presentation of film technique and its historical development, on which a rich specialized literature already exists, would have taken us outside the framework of this book.

Note to the English Edition

This book is an interesting and valuable experiment. It makes use of pictorial displays, charts and diagrams to summarize and reinforce its arguments concerning the complex series of facts and problems which are involved in any comprehensive study of the cinema.

It may be said that this style of presentation is Germanic in its neatness and thoroughness. No attempt has been made in the translation to modify this style, since it is part of the very nature and value of the work. Neither has any alteration been introduced where there is difference between conditions operating in Switzerland and in some other countries, as, for instance, in the case of the block and blind booking of films. While adopting very necessarily a world view of their subject, the Swiss authors of this volume did not forget that their first readers were to be the Swiss themselves. To my mind the occasional appearance of this national view of what is primarily an international subject gives reality as well as perspective to the arguments of this book.

The British Film Academy, London, April 1948

Roger Manvell

THE FILM

Its Economic, Social, and Artistic Problems

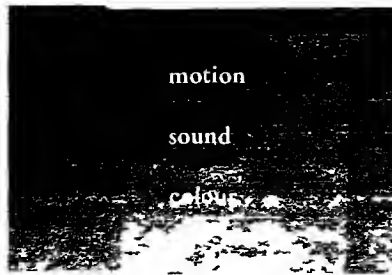
INTRODUCTION

What is the Film?



What is the film?

The film is



photography

The film is not



photography and theatre

The film is



art and theatre

INTRODUCTION

Film and Theatre

The film is not photographed theatre. The theatre has its principles; the film has its principles.

If one compares the relation between the spectator and the picture in the theatre with their relation in the case of the film, the basic differences between the theatre and the film can be clearly seen. The theatre-goer always remains emotionally outside the stage action to a certain degree, while the film-goer is alternately involved and excluded by the motion picture drama; he stands in the midst of the action and is repeatedly forced to change his viewpoint. He has no time to be aware of the distance between himself and the action on the screen. The suggestive power of the theatre seldom goes so far as to blot out completely the distance between the spectator and the stage; for the theatre-goer the distance from the stage action remains, assuring objectivity as the guarantee of artistic experience. The film-goer is hardly able to consider the film objectively, that is to keep it away from himself—he experiences it as (photographed) reality. Therein lies the enormous suggestive power of the film, but therein also lies its enormous artistic danger.

Film and Theatre

Theatre

Film



Picture without motion

Fixed distance
between scene and spectator

One-sided view

Fixed viewpoint
of spectators
outside the stage space



Picture in motion

Changing distance
between scene and spectator

All-sided view

Changing viewpoint
of spectators
in picture space

Result:

Theatre public:

Greater internal distance
to the stage action

Advantage:

The public experiences
theatre as an art

Film Public:

Less internal distance
to the picture action

Danger:

The public experiences
film not as an art,
but:
as photographed reality

INTRODUCTION

Film and Painting

By 1800 painting had developed sufficiently to be able to give a representation of visible reality complete in every detail. Only one element of external reality was still unattainable: motion. Ingres' 'Monsieur Bertin' is sitting in his chair as a representation complete to the smallest detail — 'as if photographed' we would say today — but entirely motionless.

Then around 1830 photography was invented, accomplishing exactly the same: it gave a completely detailed but motionless representation of reality. There is no difference in style between the portrait in the early period of photography and the portrait by Ingres: brush and camera strive for the same reproductive accuracy.

At this point, when photography assumes the function of painting in fulfilling the need for naturalistic representation, painting goes other ways. The Pleinairistes of 1840–60 (Courbet and the masters of Barbizon) and the Impressionists of 1860–90 (Monet, Pissaro, Sisley) criticized Ingres' detailed naturalism which, they felt, did not catch the essence: the living in nature. As a result of their pedantic completeness his human figures appear unnatural, they said. In reality — outdoors — everything looks different. All the 'complete' detail is submerged for our eyes, they maintained, in light, air and — movement. The Pleinairistes and, more radically, the Impressionists, intentionally give incomplete detail in their painting, but attempt to give a moving representation of visible reality.

At this point, when painting cannot develop any further the representation of the one moving moment — the smallest motion such as the trembling of the air and the most vehement motion like that of a galloping horse — at this moment (after 1890) motion photography is invented: had to be invented, one is inclined to say! And again painting changes its direction, as if released from one task and turning toward another one; namely the representation of invisible realities behind the visible reality; and therefore it develops a style emphasizing a form which renounces completeness of detail as well as the feeling for motion (Cézanne, van Gogh, Munch and others). Meanwhile the film gives us the complete and also the mobile representation of reality.

This naturalism in the film, which also includes movement, is no longer a stylistic problem but a given technical condition, and is therefore a decisive pre-condition for all problems of film style.

Film and Painting

Painting by 1800



gives a complete but motionless representation of reality

Photography (from 1830 on)



gives a complete but motionless representation of reality

Painting from 1860 to 1890
(Impressionism)



gives an incomplete but moving representation of reality

The film (from 1890 on)



gives a complete and moving representation of reality

INTRODUCTION

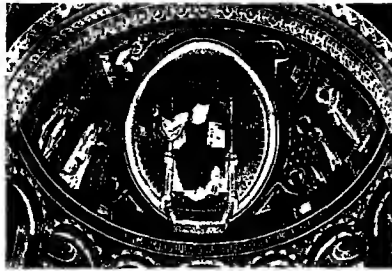
From Single Picture to Reproduction

The reproduction of pictures is an undertaking which is necessary when wider consumer classes begin to create a demand for material and spiritual goods. At this point reproduction appears as an absolute need.

So, corresponding to the appearance of the Renaissance bourgeois state, the woodcut and copper engraving appeared. Corresponding to the age of the French Revolution, which was the second great step of democratization, i. e. expansion from the town to the country, new techniques of picture reproduction were invented — as they had to be invented: lithography, xylography, autotype, and offset printing.

From Single Picture to Reproduction

The picture of the feudal middle ages:



fresco
existing in only one example
fixed to the wall



miniature
existing in only one example
fixed to the book

The picture of the democratic
Renaissance:



easel painting
existing in only one example
transportable



engraving
reproducible to any extent

After the French Revolution:

increase in techniques of reproduction: lithography
xylography
autotype
offset printing

With increasing democratization

With increasing reproduction

increasing reproduction

increasing need
for democratic consumption

INTRODUCTION

From Single Picture to Reproduction

Photography, the most important technique of picture reproduction of the 19th century, also meant a democratization of pictures. The portrait, for instance, as long as it was produced by hand, was a privilege of the nobility and the wealthy middle-class, but thanks to the technique of photography the workers in the city and the peasants in the country could have portraits of their families taken.

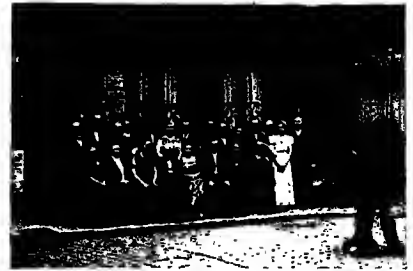
With the same historical necessity as the photograph, the cheap single portraits of the people, appeared in the early 19th century, we find that at the end of the century, with the increasing dominance of the world economy over national economy, a technique of reproduction was invented whose character is international distribution: the film. It is the picture story of the people that can be reproduced as much as desired, but it is only cheap when the increasingly high costs of production are secured through an unlimited international market.

Thus the film is also a product of the great social process of democratization. This is not in contradiction to the fact that at the same time it can be used as an extremely effective anti-democratic instrument. For, although it still appeals to everyone, it is not in the possession of everyone. We sometimes take photographs with our own cameras; we sometimes commission them. But at least the picture we commission belongs to us. With the film it is different: we are neither the direct commissioners nor the owners of the means of production of the film. Certainly the private owners of the means of production need us, for they depend on a most "democratic" market. But to maintain their position they must be against the consequent democracy. Against the radical democratic form of consumption stands the radical anti-democratic form of production. The film can become one of the strong anti-democratic instruments when the private owners of the means of production have not only economic power but at the same time political power; that is, when the totalitarian state itself becomes the producer. Then there is no anti-democratic instrument so dangerous as the film, because of the inherent demand of democratic mass consumption.

From Single Picture to Reproduction

Photography is a creation of the democratic, early industrial, national economy of the 19th century

Cheap production
Cheap reproduction
Cheap price, even though a small market
Small danger of undemocratic influence



Film is a creation of the democratic, highly industrial, world economy of the 20th century

Expensive production
Expensive reproduction
Cheap price, but only through largest market
Great danger of undemocratic influence



INTRODUCTION

The Film as a Technique

A favourite complaint against motion pictures is: the film is a technique, therefore it is not an art. The truth is that art and technique are not irreconcilable. Surely other arts, which no longer have to prove their claim to be such, have their techniques also. For example, painting. The techniques of painting correspond exactly to the single work of art produced for the single need; they are, therefore, very discreet, but they exist and limit artistic freedom with full justification and with definite stylistic consequences. The technique of the film corresponds just as precisely to the reproducible work of art produced for mass and world needs. Naturally in such a technical effort the artistic risk is much greater. But this is only a risk to the film as an art, not a counter-argument against film art.



The Film as a Technique

Painting is



also a technique



not only an art

Film is



not only a technique



but also an art

The artist dominates his techniques
if he knows their characteristics and limitations

The Costs of Production and Sale

Before a film can be made today it must be financed. Therefore we shall discuss below the different economic problems of the film, which are at the same time sociological problems.

The film-goer — like every buyer of consumer goods — as a rule asks only: What does a seat in the cinema cost? And according to his financial position he buys a stall or a balcony seat. The production costs of the film do not interest him. The legendary film kings may worry about this — he is not interested in it. It is true he thinks so little of the problems of film financing and their consequences (consequences also for him, the small film-goer) that the film producers can dare to use the gigantic production costs as propaganda: "This film cost five million dollars!" 5,000,000 dollars — it must be a great film! If the film-goer knew how much in human principles and artistic quality had to be sacrificed for this 'record sum', it would hardly be possible to use the high costs of production and the high salaries of the stars as publicity any longer.

In other words: without knowledge of the contemporary economic structure of the film industry it is not possible to understand the film as an artistic and cultural phenomenon, as an artistic and cultural problem. There, in the specific economic structure of the film lie its fantastic possibilities — but there also lie its fantastic impossibilities.

Let us first ask very naïvely: What does the production of a film cost? And what is the relation between the production costs and the costs of sale? Their relation is particularly impressive when one compares the film, painting and the theatre, as we have done here in a very simplified manner.

The decisive result of this comparison is as follows: the production costs of a painting are incomparably less than the production costs of a film. Nevertheless, from the consumer's standpoint a painting is much more expensive than a seat in the cinema. Only a few can afford to possess an original painting; everyone can afford to go to a film. But on the other hand the production costs of a film are so extraordinarily high that they require an incomparably greater number of consumers for their amortization than is necessary for the amortization of a painting or a theatre production. If one realizes that for a Class A American movie an average of one million dollars is spent (distribution costs, theatre costs and profits of the producer not included!) then it is very clear that a film depends on unlimited mass consumption.

The Costs of Production and Sale

The production costs

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| of a painting: | $\frac{\text{yearly need of a painter}}{\text{number of paintings sold in a year}} = \frac{8,000.-}{20} = \text{Fr. } 400.-$ | |
| of a theatre presentation: | $\frac{\text{yearly general operating expenses}}{\text{number of presentations in a year}} = \frac{1,000,000.-}{333} = \text{Fr. } 3,000.-$ | |
| of a fiction film: | 1910 | length 700 metres = Fr. 1,000.- |
| | 1915 | length 1000-2000 metres = Fr. 10,000.- |
| | 1920 | length 1500-2000 metres = Fr. 120,000.- |
| | 1930 | length 2400-2800 metres = Fr. 700,000.- |
| | 1940 | length 2400-2800 metres = Fr. 1,400,000.- |

The sale costs

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| of a painting: | Fr. 400.- | 1 buyer | amortizes | 1 picture |
| of a theatre visit: | Fr. 3.- | 1000 theatre-goers | amortize | 1 presentation |
| of a movie visit: | Fr. 1.- | | | |
| | 1910: | 1,000 movie-goers | amortize | 1 film * |
| | 1915: | 10,000 movie-goers | amortize | 1 film * |
| | 1920: | 120,000 movie-goers | amortize | 1 film * |
| | 1930: | 700,000 movie-goers | amortize | 1 film * |
| | 1940: | 1,400,000 movie-goers | amortize | 1 film * |

* pure production costs

without producer profit
without distribution costs (abt. 30%)
without movie theatre costs (abt. 30%)

Footnote:

Current exchange rates of the Swiss franc:

1 pound sterling = Fr. 17.60
1 dollar = Fr. 4.31

FINANCING

What causes increasing Costs?

What causes increasing Costs:

Increasing length of films

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| 1895: | 16 to 20 metres |
| today: | 2400 to 2800 metres |

Increasing production time

| | |
|--------|----------------|
| 1900: | several days |
| today: | several months |

Increasing specialization

| | | |
|--------|---|--------------|
| 1900: | producer director cameraman | } one person |
| today: | numerous specialists for the organizational technical artistic branches of production | |

Improvement of equipment

Enlargement of the production studios

Increasing scale for decor

Increasing wages of stars

The sound film increased the cost of production by 50%

The colour film increased the cost of production an additional 50%

FINANCING

Results of the Increase in Costs

The increase in the costs of film production has led to important results for production as well as for the market.

For production, it means that the studios can never rest; they have to be exploited to a maximum. But because a film has to be made in the shortest possible time, this means an increase in the quantity of production — with the danger of overproduction. And it means further, since the market must always be ready to receive new films, an artificial speeding up of amortization.

The result for distribution, however, is more important: namely, an unlimited increase of the market. This can and must happen in two directions: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal: in the international distribution of the film; autarchy and nationalism contradict the character of the film. And vertical: in reaching all classes of the population; internationalism and democratization are an essential need of the film. Already the fact that the film possesses a highly developed technique of reproduction leads to this consequence; its economic structure leads to the same consequence also.

To increase the film attendance to a maximum, the film corporations make use of all modern means of propaganda: the press, radio, television and the film itself. Film propaganda is the most convincing expression of the unscrupulous development of the market and of distribution increase.

Results of the Increase in Costs

The results of the increase in costs

for production: Necessity of maximal exploitation of production studios
 of quantitative increase in production
 of the speed-up of amortization

for the market: Necessity of international market
 of reaching all classes of the population



Increase of the market
through advertising

The Film of Small Nations (Example: the Swiss Film)

With the necessity for an international market the problem of the film production of small nations is introduced.

The film of small nations, exactly like the film of all other nations, can only survive with an international market, i.e. by obtaining international interest. This does not mean the abandonment of national characteristics; Swedish and Czech films for instance prove the contrary. However, a forced, over-pronounced nationalism is not less dangerous than a forced internationalism. Between these two dangers the films of small nations have only one chance: quality. Hollywood can successfully throw films of a poor quality on the world market; the film of small nations can only count on international interest through especially high human and artistic qualities.

The frightening discrepancy between the income of a Swiss film from the home market and its cost of production illustrates the situation strikingly. The entirely national success of the only film produced in 1937, 'Füsilier Wipf', made it the first successful Swiss film; it was supported by the awakening national self-consciousness of the pre-war years. On the basis of this success production increased rapidly to fifteen films in 1942. However, the market was already saturated, even over-saturated, and the crisis began. In the following years only very few films were made. But of those, one film of 1944 ('Marie-Louise'), as well as the only film of 1945 ('The Last Chance') succeeded abroad because of their quality.



The Film of Small Nations

The film of small nations

can only survive with an international market
this means: with international interest

International interest does not mean:
abandonment of national characteristics

Maintenance of national characteristics does not mean:
folklore

Average production costs of a Swiss film
(without general expenses and distribution costs): Fr. 120-170,000.—

Average income of a Swiss film from the home market: Fr. 80-130,000.—

Deficit without possibility of export: Fr. 40,000.—

Number of films produced in Switzerland

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Year: | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 1946 | 1947 |
| Films: | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 15 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

FINANCING

The Mission of the Film



The Mission of the Film

The result of international market
and of democratic consumption

could be:



the spreading of valid human ideas

is today predominately:



the exploitation of the wishful
thinking of the film-goer

On what does this depend? It depends on the sponsor!

FINANCING

Who is the Sponsor?

Why is the film as it is and not as it could be and should be? To answer this we must inquire about the sponsor.

The sponsor of the film, since 1920, has been the anonymous film trust, a purely financial enterprise which, because of its nature, pursues primarily commercial aims. The more expensive film production became, the more the film became a purely stock market concern; this can be illustrated by any American stock market report. Seen from the producer's* viewpoint, the film is merchandise, and as merchandise, it must bring a profit. To be profitable, it has to please as many people as possible. What pleases people? That is the crucial question for all film production.

The American films of the 'thirties and 'forties show that productions may sometimes have artistic and spiritual pretensions if they can still find their markets. For this reason films can be produced which expose to criticism the economic and social situations on which film production itself depends. In such cases art, human sincerity and the criticism of society are never the real aim but only a means to secure the market.

In some countries the state is the sponsor of the films. In this case it is imperative to consider whether the film is used as a democratic instrument or as an anti-democratic instrument. By 1919 Russia had nationalized its entire film production. After the end of the Second World War, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia proceeded to nationalize their film industries completely. The film became a pronounced anti-democratic means of state propaganda in Fascist Italy and National-Socialist Germany.

* *Translator's Note:* The word producer is used for two executives in the film industry, the financial sponsor and the studio executive directly responsible for supervising a film through its stages of production. It is the financial sponsor to which reference is made in this section.

Who is the Sponsor?

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| The sponsor of painting is | in the Middle Ages | the church |
| | in the Renaissance | the burgher |
| | in the Baroque period | the sovereign |
| | in the 19th and 20th centuries | the painter himself |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| The sponsor of the theatre is | in the Middle Ages | the church |
| | in the Renaissance | the burgher community |
| | in the Baroque period | the sovereign |
| | in the 19th century | the private theatre enterprise |
| | in the 20th century | the company |

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| The sponsor of the film is | around 1900 | the showman |
| | around 1910 | the private film enterprise |
| | since 1920 | the anonymous film trust |

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--|
| The sponsor of film | has primarily | not cultural but commercial interests |
|---------------------|---------------|--|

For him film is merchandise

The merchandise film must be profitable
must be consumed by as many people as possible
must please as many people as possible

—What pleases people?—

The film production — as speculation about the consumer —
contains an extraordinarily high risk
offers an extraordinarily high chance for profit

FINANCING

Capital Investment in the Film Industry

Unusually high capital investments are characteristic of the entire film industry. The results of the high capitalization of the film industry are: the rapid concentration of invested capital, international interlocking of the great production companies, and an encroachment by the production companies on the previously independent distribution companies and also on the movie theatres. The great production companies, especially the American, own distribution offices in all countries and assure the sale of their films by having their own movie theatres. Before the Second World War more than two-thirds of the entire distribution income was divided among five powerful film trusts (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer about 18 per cent, 20th Century Fox about 14, Paramount about 14, Warner Brothers about 14, R. K. O. about 9 per cent). These five companies own or control around 2600 movie theatres, among them most of the 'strategically' important first-run theatres. Similar developments can be recognized in other countries, especially in Britain.

Outside these great concerns, the independent producers have a difficult position, especially since they depend on the theatres and the channels of distribution belonging to the large film combines for the amortization of their film costs.

Capital Investment in the Film Industry

The film industry demands exceptionally high capital investments

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Capital invested in the world film industry (in 1939): | Fr. 13,500,000,000.— |
| of this amount, from America: | Fr. 9,225,000,000.— |
| Movie theatres | Fr. 8,550,000,000.— |
| Studios | Fr. 562,500,000.— |
| Distribution | Fr. 112,500,000.— |

Results: Rapid concentration of film companies
 Dominant position of some large-capital film companies
 International interlocking of film companies
 Severe competition for the market fields

FINANCING

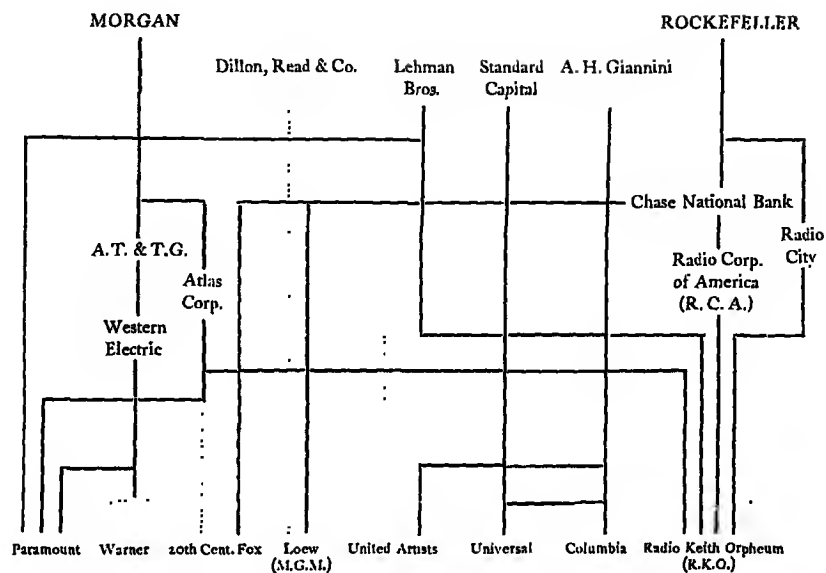
Monopoly in the Film Industry

The eight American production companies listed in the accompanying charts dominate the American and to a large extent also the world market. The whole film industry, concentrated in itself, is dominated by American banks and industrial capital. The large banks determine the activities of the film companies by owning the majority stock, while the electrical industries, by owning the patent monopoly on the sound recording and projection machines, control the production and presentation systems. Finally the finance groups, dominating in turn the great banks and electrical industries, are much the same. The marked interlocking of capital and persons in industry and banks—the whole situation is of course much more complicated than the accompanying schemes show—explains the relaxation of competition and far-reaching collaboration among the leading American film companies.

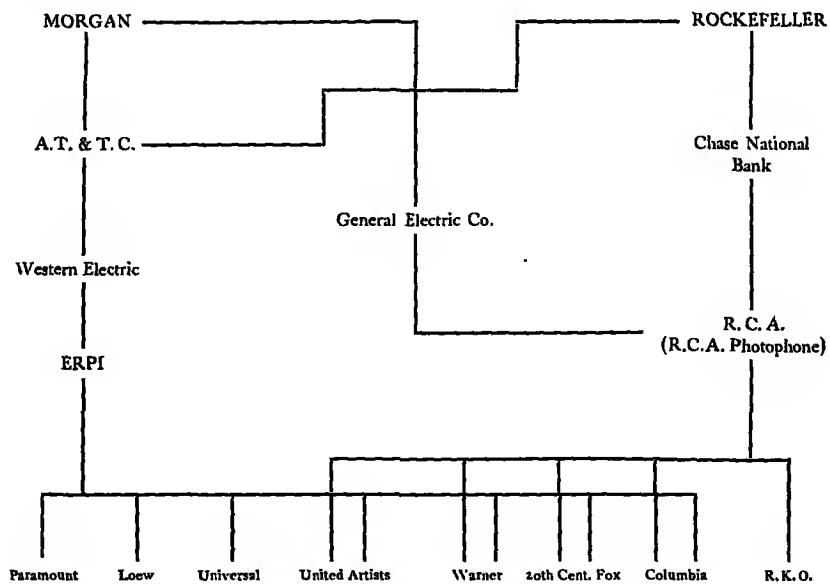
Monopoly in the Film Industry

The film industry in its turn is dominated by financial capital
i. e., bank and industrial capital

Control of production



Control of the sound and projection machinery



FINANCING

Standardization of Film Production

Film production has to be profitable. The effect and success of a film, however, are factors that cannot be defined. The higher the production costs, the higher the number of filmgoers necessary for amortization of a film and the higher the market risk. Therefore the market risk is the central problem of the developed film industry. Economic measures taken to reduce the risk have already been discussed.

But the sales risk also limits the artistic freedom of the film creator. It produces the fear of the new, the unaccustomed, the truth. It leads to the production of films that please everybody as much as possible, regardless of differences of nationality, allegiance and personal dispositions. It leads to standardization of the film production.

The most obvious expression of standardization is the star, the public favourite, built up to assure stability in the sale of the films in which the star appears. For the same reason stereotyped film themes developed, dominating the screen by quantity (Wild West films, gangster films, musical revue films etc.). Standardization also shows in the series films, where the same actors appear in the same milieu and in the same parts ('Tarzan', 'The Hardy Family', 'Frankenstein', etc.). Theatre successes and best sellers, widely read magazine stories and favourite radio plays are filmed ('Rebecca', 'Mrs. Miniver', 'Gone with the Wind', etc.). Previously successful films are refilmed because renewed success seems to be guaranteed ('Thief of Bagdad', 'Lady Hamilton', 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde', etc.). In the year 1940 Hollywood producers paid over one million dollars for original stories and unproduced theatre plays, while for published stories and produced plays about three and a half millions were expended!

Standardization of Film Production

The market risk

limits the artistic freedom
creates fear of the new
leads to standardization of film production



The star as a guarantee of success



Stereotyped film themes



Film serials



Filming of successful novels and plays

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Scenario

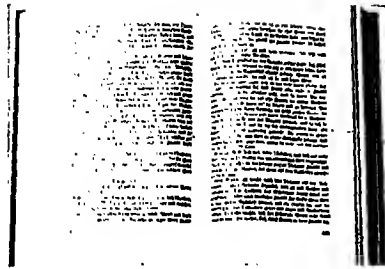
The Scenario

Through the arguments in the five main chapters, financing—artistic production—distribution—presentation—consumption—it will become clear that the film as an art, and more so than any other art, is very deeply involved in commercial processes. This is the great esthetic handicap of the film. But it also gives rise to a more fortunate situation. Art in the film is no longer an affair of displaced bohemians, individuals on the border of society. Film art becomes part of the balance of power of the entire society owing to its economic importance. The desire of the past two hundred years for an 'art for everybody' seems on its way to fulfilment, but is not yet fulfilled. Most films are still a compromise, not art. This is not a condition brought about by the film itself, but by its economic and social circumstances. The production of a film is not yet entirely a human and artistic problem, but in the first place an economic problem, a problem of marketing.

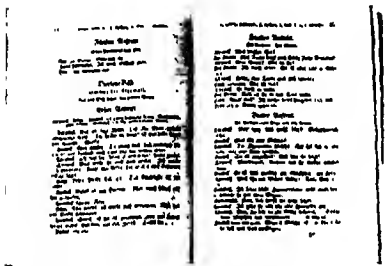
The scenario is not an independent branch of literature like the novel or the drama. It contains a literary form in its dialogue, but nevertheless it is not an autonomous work of art. Also it is not readily 'presented' as is a stage play. It is only preparatory work, a preliminary to the film. It corresponds most closely to the direction-book of the theatre director, but covers essentially more than this, namely the original action of the entire film, the dialogue and to a large extent even the sequence of the individual pictures or shots.

Indeed there are also theatre plays which are little more than scenarios. In particular, some modern plays are completed only in their actual presentation.

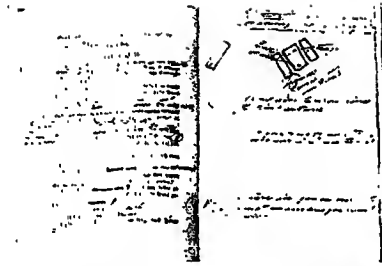
The Scenario



The novel
is an independent work of art
is read



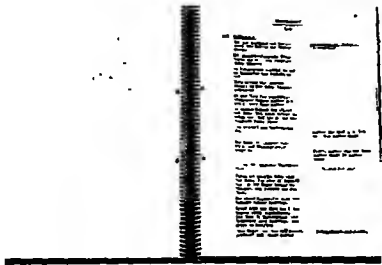
The drama
is an independent work of art
is read and presented



The stage scenario
is not an independent work of art
is not read
is a step between drama
and presentation



The presentation
is a secondary
independent work of art
is an artistic interpretation
of the drama



The film scenario
is not an independent work of art
is not read
is a preliminary step to the film



The film
is a primary independent work of art

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Scenario

The Picture-Score

The film is a picture art; therefore the 'picture-score' is the most essential part of the scenario.

Reviewing the history of stage art from the classical theatre to the film, a general increase in the function of the stage picture is recognizable.

The classical drama contents itself with the minimum of picture indications; the dialogue is absolutely dominant. The man speaking (in verse) dominates the picture, and is in no way incorporated into the picture. This corresponds also to his spiritual relation to the surrounding world; he does not stay in the real '*milieu*' but is sovereign in an ideal scene.

Changes of scene are infrequent. This means that the recitation of continuous stretches of dialogue is not interrupted by pronounced picture dynamics. The change of scenes and acts does not make the whole dynamic; it builds it up, organizes it in static sections, between which recesses are introduced.

In the 'naturalistic' drama at the end of the 19th century the importance of the picture increases strikingly. The picture indications extend into lengthy stage directions; this already shows the drama giving some of its autonomy away to the staging. Even when the dialogue still dominates, the picture evidently assumes great importance. Man is spiritually, dramatically and visually incorporated in the real '*milieu*' — this being the keyword of this movement.

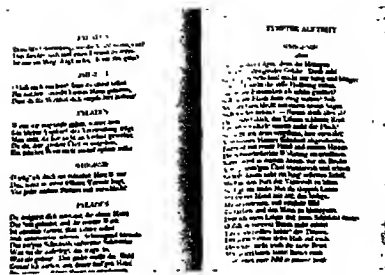
Scene changes happen more frequently than in the classical theatre. The static nature of the five acts is broken up into a sequence of pictures developing horizontally. In this way something epic, novel-like — something film-like, enters the drama. The 'epic' drama of modern authors (e. g. Bert Brecht) completes this development.

In the film the relation is reversed. The picture indications are not only very complete, they are more important than the dialogue. Man is placed completely in the real *milieu*. When he leaves it, which means when he goes out of the picture, the film is exposed to an artistic danger. That this is the case in the majority of motion pictures does not change anything in the true character of the film.

The picture is in unceasing movement. Camera and montage organize the film in a manner no longer vertical; there is no curtain falling; there are no 'recesses'; the horizontal, dynamic or epic principle is triumphant. Therefore the film (the scenario) is closer in its general organization to the novel (the epic poem) than to the stage drama.

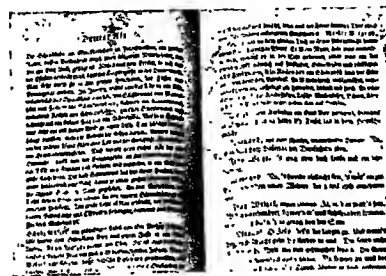
The Picture-Score

Classical drama around 1800



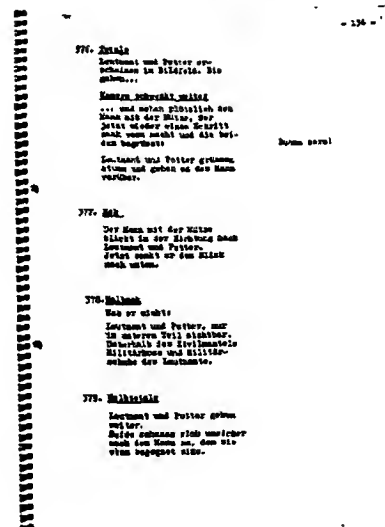
minimum picture indication
rare change of scene
almost entirely dialogue
man in an ideal scene

'Naturalistic' drama around 1890



detailed picture indication
frequent changes of scene
dialogue still dominates
man in a real milieu

Film Scenario



detailed picture indication
rapid changes of scene
picture dominates
man in a real milieu

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Scenario

The Dialogue-Score

The sentence 'The film is a pictorial art' is relatively unproblematic for the silent film. It becomes problematic with the coming of the sound film. The great, even though involuntary, advantage of the silent film was the necessity to speak through optical means, through silent gesticulations. The sound film, with its spoken dialogue, may seem not to need the picture. And it can stress a fundamental law of the film: greater naturalness; spoken dialogue is more natural than gesticulation. But then dialogue is much more convenient; everything is easily dressed in words. The simplest way of conveying something is to express it in dialogue. So with the dialogue the film goes out of its element, the visual element, and becomes something else, hybrid, foreign to the film. The camera becomes only a means to the end; it loses its artistic self-confidence. It photographs merely passively the actor with his dialogue. The dialogue talks the picture to death.

But the solution is not just to eliminate the dialogue. The dialogue must be incorporated, indeed it must be made an integral part of the film. It will not then overshadow the visual aspect. It cannot be omitted from the picture; it must rather enrich the picture by blending with it. The picture must dominate human speech. But it is difficult to let the picture speak when men speak, since men speak louder and in clearer formulations, while the photographic picture speaks more 'between the lines'. Therefore one should try to let the characters speak 'between the lines' of the picture. This implies a specific dialogue style, a sound film style that only a few dialogue writers have mastered today.

Dialogue is today the central problem of the film, but always only as a foil for the film as a picture art.

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|---|
| In the drama: | dialogue | the essential bearer of action extensive dialogue |
| In the novel: | story in words | the essential bearer of action extensive and short dialogue inserted in the word-story |
| In the film: | picture-story | the essential bearer of the action short dialogue inserted in the picture-story |

Advantage: strong visual quality
Danger: unnatural

Advantage: natural
Danger: weakening
of visual quality

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Scenario

The Sound Effects Score

Sound effects have a decisive advantage over dialogue; by their nature they are closer to the visual than to the acoustic. Nearly every optical event in reality is accompanied by sounds, which are, so to speak, an acoustic commentary on the event. Thus the sound effects are directly interrelated with the optical event. They do not counteract the visual, for, unlike the dialogue, the sound effects do not live an autonomous life. Their sphere is the visual.

The film as photography is always in danger of being exposed to visual reality with all its hazards and formlessness. But it does not live or die by the sound effects. Therefore the sound effects mean an extraordinary enrichment for it. Here the film has an entire keyboard over which it can freely play. Here it can omit, select, or emphasize at its own free will. In reality we live in a chaos of sounds, in an enormous unceasing bedlam. But we do not hear this bedlam, we accustom ourselves to it and forget it; only in absolute silence are we conscious of it. Merely a few sounds enter our consciousness distinctly, sounds we listen for or that surprise us. Even in reality therefore we select sounds. The film does the same thing, but much more intensively, while excluding the sounds we are accustomed to. Therefore, since the sound effects now appear on the basis of the absolute silence of the picture, they acquire more weight, intensity, expression, and at the same time the tension between the sound effects and the picture is preserved.

Basically, film music has exactly the same function as film sound effects, only it is seldom conscious of these functions. Also the music has to derive from the picture, and therefore exist for the picture. But as in most films we must let the excess of sound effects pass over us, even more so must we let the excess of music pass us by. The music by itself is not bound to visual events. It is an absolutely free ingredient. It is therefore not sufficient that the film music is musically good. It has to be backed visually; it has to have visual power of expression. Also it must be one with the picture. Actually the picture does not need music, only musical sounds, economic musical support and accentuation. Within these limitations, the possibilities are inexhaustible: from the underlying atmosphere through the sustaining rhythm to the expressive intensification.

The Sound Effects Score

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| In the classical drama: | infrequent use of sound effects |
| In the 'naturalistic' drama: | occasional expressive use of sound effects |
| In reality: | chaotic sound effects yet most sound effects do not appear in the consciousness |
| In the film: | exploitation of sound effects appearing in the consciousness |

Film sound effects -- as well as film music--

- illustrate movements
- dramatize actions
- intensify atmospheres
- symbolize feelings
- associate relations

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Scenario

The Scenario in the History of the Film

The earliest films did not have an actual scenario as a basis, since they did not tell a unified story. They were only a succession of situation ideas.

Since 1908 the titles between pictures appeared to assist the progress of the action; they were at the same time the first unspoken dialogue. Artistically they must be rejected, since they are an inorganic piece of narration. The film should tell everything in pictures. Certainly it should not show a weakness by recurring to methods that are obvious makeshift. But after all there are rare exceptions, where the text between pictures is artistically included; in many Russian films the titles become even an active element of montage.

The sound film initiates, on the one hand, a decisive stage towards a greater reality, but on the other hand a catastrophic crisis for the picture. This crisis is actually still pending today. It is therefore one of the most important tasks of the film to develop, in intensive relation with the picture, the marvellous possibilities of human dialogue and sound effects.

With the sound film a difficult problem arose, which can be partially compared to the text between pictures. It has a purely technical origin, but unfortunately it affects the artistic aspects for the worse. Everyone, men of all languages, could essentially understand the silent film. But the sound film must be translated. This is done by synchronization or subtitles. Both devices damage the artistic effect of a film very considerably. With a few exceptions, one may state that as a rule synchronization is the greater evil, although it may seem that the film as a pictorial art would react more sensitively to subtitles. But a picture can equally be distorted by the acoustic effects, since dialogue and sound have an essential part in forming the picture as such.

The Scenario in the History of the Film

Silent film (1895–1929)

The earliest films are successions of events
do not yet have unified action

The scenario in the silent film is only a picture-score

Sound film (since 1929)

The scenario in the sound film is picture-score and sound-score

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|---|
| The sound film brings | a progress: | greater reality |
| | a crisis: | dominance of actor and dialogue decline of the pictorial discipline of the silent film |

The crisis of film art in the sound film

is no argument against the art of the sound film

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

Film Direction

Film Direction

The creator responsible for a film is the director. He has the general direction of all sections of the collective artistic work. Of course there are exceptions, when another collaborator gives a film his specific style; in rare cases the cameraman, in frequent cases the author of the dialogue, and very frequently the star, who most of the time, however, does harm to the film as such. In addition, in America the producer is often more influential in the control of the film than his director, who then acts only as a technician.

The task of the theatrical director is primarily the direction of the actors, and only secondarily the stage picture. Of course this relation changes from director to director and from play to play, and above all from the style of one period to another.

The first task of the film director, in contrast, is the picture direction with its two main sections: camera direction and montage. Good direction of the actors, which is, of course, also of the greatest importance for the film, does not by itself make a good film. Only through the picture direction does the whole undertaking become a film.

Since the functions of the film director include direction of the actors and direction of the picture, one should read the following chapter on the film actor and the film picture, so to speak, under the heading of Film Direction.

Film Direction

The theatre director is responsible for the presentation, not for the drama
The presentation serves the drama

The film director is the responsible creator of the film
is responsible for the scenario and the presentation
The scenario serves the presentation

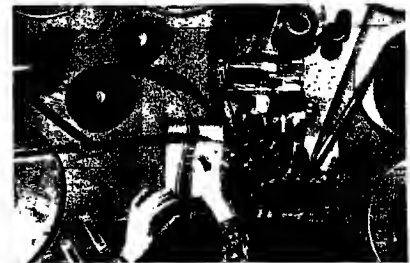
The task of the theatre director is primarily: direction of the actors
is secondarily: direction of the picture

The task of the film director is primarily: direction of the picture

Camera direction



Montage direction



is secondarily: direction of the actors



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

The Actor

in the Theatre

in the Film



The Actor

in the Theatre

in the Film

The art of the stage
is an art of the actor



The art of the screen
is an art of the picture

The stage cannot exist
without actors



The film can exist
without actors

On the stage
only the actor acts



In the film
all visible things act

On the stage the actor
is the bearer of words



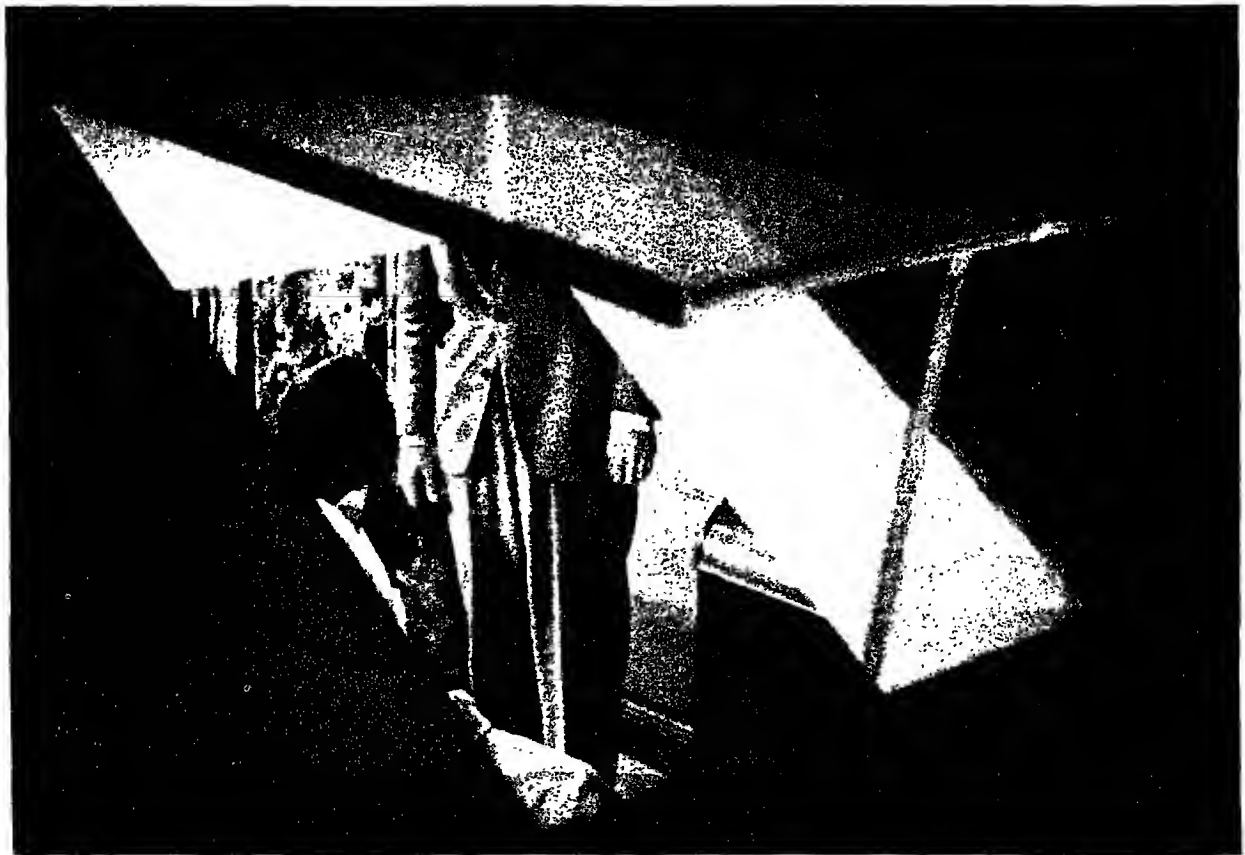
In the film the actor
is the material of the pictorial language

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

The Film Actor as Material of the Pictorial Language

The film actor is material of the pictorial language. The film picture uses *him*, operates with *him*. It takes the actor as it needs him; it takes of him what it needs. It does not simply photograph him as bearer of the expression he himself has or acts, but gives him a new expression through the setting, light, camera movement and montage. This does not mean passivity for the actor, but on the contrary the highest effort — effort to integrate himself in the dynamic of the picture.



The Film Actor as Material of the Pictorial Language

The film actor can be shown

close



in full visibility

distant



in partial visibility



seen from below

seen from above



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

The Film Actor and Reality

Although somewhat an overstatement, one is inclined to say: in the good actor humanity, life, everyday reality plays itself. This, of course, is only valid for the effect, not for the effort. The effect of the good, well-guided film actor must be absolute naturalness. His artistic effort is thereby not less than the effort of a classical actor or any other stage actor. Therefore the non-professional actor, often praised as an ideal in film circles, is problematic. For it is not important to be a non-professional, but rather to give the impression of being one, and this is a question of the quality of the acting alone.



The Film Actor and Reality

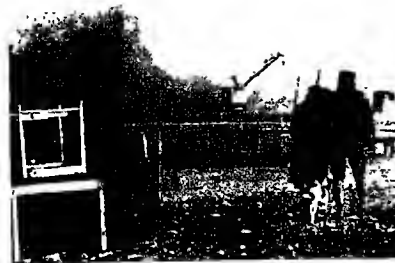
In the good film actor



humanity



life



everyday



reality

plays itself

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

The Actor in the Period of the Silent Film

In its earliest period, around 1900, the film did not need the artist, as it did not yet pretend to be an art. On one hand, it was an object of scientific research (projection of movement); on the other hand, a fairground attraction.

Only around 1910 did the film become artistically self-conscious. But it did not yet recognize its own artistic autonomy; it looked above itself and saw — the theatre. The first 'art films' were nothing else than bad versions of classical or modern plays. Great artists of the stage, like Sarah Bernhardt, Cecile Sorci, the entire Comédie Française, Herbert Bosworth and others were signed to act in films.

But at the same time the first 'pure' film actors appeared. Characteristically, they rarely came from above, from the theatre, but most of the time from the variety show, from the small-time theatre, or directly from the street. On one hand, this is satisfactory because it is a development away from the theatre towards the film; it is seen in the fact that then the first real film directors appear. But on the other hand, this development introduces a new phenomenon: the film star.



The Actor in the Period of the Silent Film

Around 1900:

The actors of the earliest films:



the director
his family, his friends
the studio workers

Around 1910:

Competition with the theatre:



filming of classical stage plays
employment of great stage artists

1910—1923:

The first 'pure' film actors:



do not come from above,
from the theatre
but from below,
from the music-hall,
from the street

Beginning of film star worship



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

Standardization of the Actor

An important development that appeared rather early, between 1920 and 1930, and after that increased considerably, is the gradual standardization of the film actor. This is the immediate outcome of the progressive commercialization of the film. It is not to be confused with the establishment of character types, developed primarily in the old Russian films and also quite consciously emphasized today in other countries by important directors. In the average film one does not see this real character type, but standardized individuals, always acting nothing but their own individual self and never being more than average humans, patterns, clichés. The highest form of this standardized individualism is the star, in whom nevertheless all the negative characteristics of standardization may be combined with a great talent for acting.

Nothing shows the level on which the film operates today more strikingly than this standard type of artist who is democratic in so far that he attracts mass consumption, but is anti-democratic and authoritarian in his influence upon the public.

Standardization of the Film Actor (since 1930)



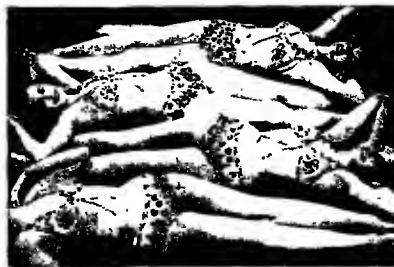
"the" vamp



"the" hero



"the" cowboy



"the" glamour-girl

Standardization of acting in the film

= glorification of average types

= speculation on the wishful dreams of the little man
of the little girl

= growing star worship

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Actor

The Actor in the Period of the Sound Film



The Actor in the Period of the Sound Film

Everything revolves around the actor



the film
the wishful dream
the business

Few directors

master the rules of the film
obey the rules of the film
give the actor
his outer restrictions
his inner freedom



in the picture frame

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Film and Reality

To suggest an antithesis between direct representation and artistic creation is not entirely correct, because film representation is already a creative act. The camera possesses an extraordinarily wide range of creative possibilities, from the almost completely passive taking of pictures to the dramatized recreation of an event. This is illustrated by the two pictures opposite taken from the film of the Olympic Games.

Since the film is a photographic art it is inseparably bound to visible reality. But by its very photographic nature it can transform reality. It always has to start from visible reality, but it can abolish the physical laws of reality, for instance, it can abolish the law of gravity; it can subordinate the external factors of visible reality to other laws of space and time. Thus the film is always able, with the external elements of visible reality, to pass into the realm of psychological events, of phantasy, dreams, of the unconscious. It can be the suggestive instrument of a visual psychology. This transformation of external reality into the sense of internal reality (and also internal unreality) is one of the most natural potentialities of the film. There is need to mention but one great pioneer: Georges Méliès. After him the surrealists have widely exploited this possibility of the film.

Film and Reality

The film allows

not only



representation of reality

but also



its artistic creation

The film creates

not only visible reality

but also



the reality of psychic events



the reality of the dream

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Film Décor

Theatre Décor — Film Décor

An old adage calls the theatre 'the boards that represent the universe'. The theatre is not identical with the world. It does not represent it directly; it implies the world, it symbolizes it, it stylizes it. Therefore stage décor does not have to offer an illusion of reality (except for a 'naturalistic' play); it does not need to deny its character as décor; one is allowed, so to speak, to recognize that the setting is made of cardboard.

It is different with the film. Film represents reality, but as an artistic creation. It suggests reality, but in an artistic way. This is less true of the time sequence (which does not correspond to reality) than of the picture, the photography. As a photographic art, the film depends on being real, or at least on seeming real. Therefore film décor must be real or at least appear real.

The fact is that film décor that has the effect of unreality is legitimate in some perhaps particularly artificial films, that is, in films where something has to be expressed that is unreal or theatrical. The same thing is also true of period costume, which is basically not film-like; it cannot be absorbed by photography, although in certain circumstances it can be made extraordinarily film-like: when it stands for something contradictory, something sham, something antedated, even though it may be fashionable. In addition, stylized décor and costumes, in films that are intentionally unrealistic or surrealistic, may occasionally have an ironic justification. In every case, however, it requires an extraordinary mastery of the film to make them acceptable artistically.

Theatre Décor — Film Décor

Stage décor

may be recognized



as being cardboard

Film décor

must



be real

or



appear real

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Film Décor

Décor in the History of the Film

The earliest film décor consisted of theatre scenery of two dimensions. No matter how violent the movement might be, the scenery remained as a rigid background. Even in the work of such an important film pioneer as Georges Méliès this remained so. The 'art films' of 1910 are nothing more than filmed theatre productions. They are played entirely on the stage. D. W. Griffith, however, filmed outdoors.

In 1914 the spectacular film 'Cabiria' was produced in Italy. In it the two-dimensional theatre sets were replaced by three-dimensional buildings. But their character as artificial settings was not lost. The spectacular period style of this film was influential chiefly in America, where one film after another tried to outdo it in the scale and splendour of its settings.

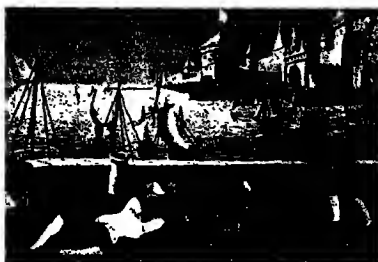
Expressionism provided an interlude around 1918, mainly in Germany. 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' is representative. The expressionistic style does not fit in with external reality, but it suits cardboard scenery well enough, since it can be designed freely for expressive purposes. It was not recognized that this method of expressive design is contrary to the character of the film.

Today the film has three possibilities: studio work, film architecture built in the open and natural landscape. In principle the décor problem is solved: the film sets must be real or at least look real. This naturally does not imply the absence of any further problems in film décor: each film has its own individual problem to solve.



Decor in the History of the Film

In the beginning



two-dimensional theatre scenery

Since 1914



three-dimensional buildings
historical spectacular productions
in Italy and America

After 1918



'expressionistic' cardboard scenery

Since 1925



Studio décor



Outdoor sets



Natural landscape

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

The Set-Up



The Set-Up

The set-up is the choice of the photographic picture frame

It is the elementary action in taking photographs and pictures



It forces
photographic technique



to serve art



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

The Basic Set-Ups

The functions of the three characteristic and basic set-ups: long shot, close shot and close-up are not exhausted by the pictures and text on the opposite page. The reversed sequence or the absence of any sequence at all creates a completely different effect. There are no universal rules here; the individual case determines the effect.

The Basic Set-Ups

The long shot



leads into the scene

The close shot



selects
increases tension

The close-up



concentrates interest and attention
to an extreme

The transition can be

continuous
abrupt

slow
fast

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

The Close-Up

Among the basic set-ups the close-up rightly enjoys a place of artistic privilege. It is the psychological microscope of the film. But it is also a means of obtaining the most dramatic possible effects. This depends entirely upon how it is used. It was developed fully by Griffith and the Russians. Since then it has become part of the usual film vocabulary of the average director. But again and again it proves to be the 'miracle' of film art.



The Close-Up

The close-up is the miracle of film art



It brings things nearer to us



It brings men nearer to us

It reveals the most intimate structures



It reveals the most intimate emotions



It dramatizes the action



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

Various Set-Ups

The possibilities of film expression by means of camera set-up are not exhausted by full view, partial view, view from above and below, diagonal view and so forth. They are unlimited. Only in each individual case are they revealed. In addition, one cannot consider them statically, but only when they are combined with all the possibilities of movement, which again are unlimited.



Various Set-Ups

The set-up seizes things in

full view



partial view



view from above



view from below

diagonal view



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

Space

A fundamental concern of the set-up is the creation of space. The film is a two-dimensional art; it translates space into a single plane, into the limited plane of the screen, but without giving up spatial illusion. Thus, different perspectives result, all of which can be exploited artistically: selection from space, space perspective, spatial overlapping, etc. They are the same effects the painter uses. But in the film one has to consider movement again; here space itself is always in movement. And allowing also for the montage, one gets to realize how the film is able consciously to create space. The unity of the space in which we live is altogether abolished.

An important advantage possessed by the film over its kindred art, the theatre, is that the film artist can dispose of space in free creation. Stage-space does not allow nearly as much creative range — from the microscopic section to the widest horizon. Its possibilities of movement are actually very limited. But, above all, stage space suffers from a very great disadvantage: it is not related to one spectator, every spectator has his own perspective. Any possible consideration of spatial effects by the director is cancelled out by the variety of the audience's viewpoints. The film picture knows only one point of view, the eye of the camera, to which the eye of every spectator corresponds. Therefore through the eye of the camera picture space is dominated absolutely by the intention of the artist.

Space

The set-up represents space in the plane of the picture

Important means of expression are therefore:

space perspective



selection from space



Space



may be pictured as space



may be dramatized as an experience

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Set-Up

Light

Light is an essential means of expression in the film. The film picture originates in the element of light. The picture in the black-and-white film particularly depends on light, reacting most sensitively to it. Light lends itself to the strongest effects as well as to the most delicate nuances.



Light

Light sensitivity is a main characteristic of film material

Light is therefore an essential means of expression in film art

It builds up the picture



It creates contrasts



It forms delicate transitions



It dramatizes action



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

In contrast to the still picture, movement is the decisive characteristic of the film picture. The film is born of movement. Movement as such was the first sensation it offered.

The movement of the film can only be described by means of the film itself, it cannot be described in a book. All that has been said here about the actor in the picture, about the set-up, about space, about light, should not be visualized statically, as if referring to the still picture, but rather dynamically, referring to the picture in motion.

We distinguish three basic forms of film movement: movement within the picture, movement of the picture itself, and movement from picture to picture, which is the montage. Yet movement in the film is not exhausted by these three basic forms. First, combinations of the three fundamental types of movement are not merely possible, they are indeed the rule. Further, they indicate only the outer frame, within which the unending nuances of movement take place. These cannot be summarized in an equation. For the film artist, the problem of film movement begins within this commonly agreed framework.

Movement in the Picture

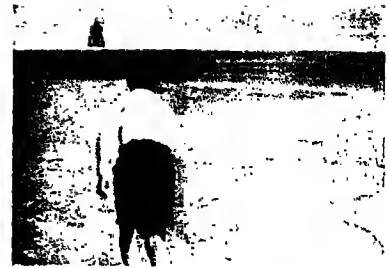
The conveyers of movement in the picture are men, animals, vehicles, and animated objects. Its expression depends primarily upon its speed and direction in the picture. Thus, for instance, a movement away from the spectator in the picture space means: reduction of size, reduction of speed, reduction of tension. Or the opposite movement gives the opposite effect. It is at the same time relevant whether the movement is rapid or slow, smooth or abrupt. But these are only the most elementary, the most ordinary differences of effect. Even the smallest twitch of a hand or the lightest play of the wind in a curtain can be full of infinite expression. Mostly it is just these unique movements, which cannot be summarized in words or equations, that determine the momentary expression in a film.

Movement in the Picture

The activity of a movement
depends upon its speed and direction in the picture

Movement into space:

reduction of size
reduction of speed
reduction of tension



Movement out of space:

increasing size
increasing speed
increasing tension

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

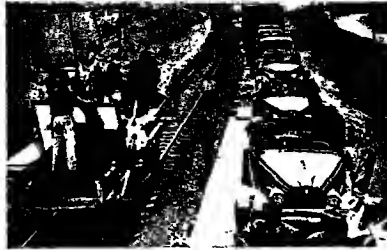
Movement of the Picture

Movement of the picture itself occurs through movement of the camera. As long as only the objects in the picture move it is not the camera that determines the movement (or only in so far as the picture set-up gives to the movement an expression of its own); it is therefore not yet actual film movement. The movement of the camera transforms the picture continuously, it may be to the right, to the left, up, down, toward an object, away from an object, back and forth between two speaking people, quick, slow, etc. Here, also, only a bare outline can be indicated; the possibilities are inexhaustible.

Movement of the Picture

Movement of the picture occurs through the movement of the camera

The 'wandering' camera



accompanies the event

The camera distance to an object can be

maintained: equal tension



enlarged: decrease of tension

shortened: increase of tension

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

Movement from Picture to Picture = Montage

In movement from picture to picture, that is in montage, one picture does not merge into another, i. e. the picture does not change continuously, but rather different pictures occur in sequence. A sequence of pictures, which of course can possess the two basic forms of movement mentioned before, is spliced together.

The process of film montage consists of cutting the single, continuously taken film and joining it together in a new sequence. (Montage is used here in its original meaning before it was narrowed down to a technical term indicating a number of shots required for an impressionistic bridging sequence.)

The montage is done by the cutter, usually under the supervision of the director. It can be almost entirely predetermined in the scenario.

The accompanying pictures, which only show the most important principles, give some idea of the wonderful possibilities of montage.

Movement from Picture to Picture = Montage

Film montage means: splicing together of different pieces of film

Film montage means: cutting the film
and joining it

Film montage can be contrasting:



single cut

Film montage can be gradual:



through fade-in
fade-out
superimposition

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

Montage

Montage organizes the film into large and small sections. No curtain comes down as in the theatre; montage achieves this directly. Not only are the large sections put together, but every little scene receives its unique organization through montage. The ploughing of an acre (from 'Mother' by Pudovkin) is not shown in its entire continuity, but only in its most important moments, and in this way becomes an intensive experience. The dance rhythm of the unforgettable dancer in René Clair's *Entr'acte* was immediately transposed into film-like dance rhythm through montage.

Montage

A well-acted and well-photographed film is not by this alone a good film

It is the montage that completes the film

Montage



organizes the action



gives rhythm to the changing picture

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

Time Creation through Montage

A film is shown in about two hours. It represents events of more than two hours, perhaps of a decade or a century. Film time thus has its own measure; it is not identical with real time or with represented time. In the time of two hours (real time) it represents a time span of much more than two hours (represented time). Thus it affords, so to speak, a concentration of time.

Montage as time creation does not seem to be different from the theatre, but in reality the differences are quite important. The theatre also represents a much longer time span in a few hours, but there is no real concentration of time. Only now and again the curtain falls — and an entirely new time section begins; its duration is identical with the real time it takes to show it. Time does not shift, as in the film from picture set-up to picture set-up, quickly pulled ahead from second to second. Above all one does not experience the break between scenes or acts. What montage is to the film, the recess is to the theatre — something entirely different.

Montage

Thus it interrupts the continuity of time

it creates time not as a sequence,

Dynamic montage



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ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

Space Creation through Montage

Montage destroys not only the unity of time but also the unity of space. From picture to picture the spectator is torn from one spatial perspective to another, from one spatial dimension to another. Our space perception, basic to our entire perception of life, is constantly and ruthlessly attacked. Contemplative recognition, such as the recognition of the picture space of a painting or the space of the stage, is not possible. Just as montage does not depict time as a sequence, but dramatizes it as an experience, so it also depicts space not as a situation, but as a dynamic experience, a concentration of space.

Space Creation through Montage

Montage

cuts represented space into sections
joins space sections to one another

Thus it interrupts the continuity of represented space
it relates separate spaces
it creates space not as a situation
but as an experience

Dynamic montage



= concentrated space experience
= tension!

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Movement in the Film

Creation of Associations through Montage

Montage not only creates time and space. Sometimes the film, with the help of montage, leaves these dimensions and enters an entirely different, a psychological and spiritual dimension.

One can define montage as an association, a joining of pictures. A natural task of montage is, therefore, the creation of psychological associations. With this, the film wins a wider, endlessly fertile field of possibilities for expression.

The impressiveness of montage is inevitable. For example: the stone head of the Czar with his eyes on infinity — the coat of arms of the almighty state — the inhuman head of the judge with his eyes on the law book — the desperation of the mother of the condemned man. ('Mother' by Pudovkin.)

In addition there is sound association, which can emphasize the extraordinary impressiveness of picture association (through words, sound effects, music). This should not be confused with sound montage, through which sound not directly related to the picture is fused with the image, entering into a definite relation with it. Sound montage is not a problem of the picture but a problem of sound itself.

Associative montage is, consciously or unconsciously, employed in every film; but one can go very far with it. It became a real creative principle in the surrealist film. Here montage based on purely psychological association replaces montage based on space, time and even rational causality. It is no longer perceived consciously but only unconsciously. (The danger here of over-consciousness, of a pronounced intellectualism is very great.)

Creation of Associations through Montage

Montage

cuts different association sequences
joins pictures from different association sequences to one another

Thus it brings the different association pictures

not in temporal

not in spatial

but in emotional or rational relation

Montage is the film's means of



creating associations

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

Tricks in the Fiction Film

As a photographic art the film remains within the limits of visible reality, that is, within naturalism. Its artistic means of creation are bounded by this naturalistic framework. This remains true even though the film has the capacity, through tricks, to abolish the existing laws of visible reality, for instance the law of gravity. Tricks are a specific film technique, a specific photographic technique. Their material is always external reality. They do not entirely abolish external appearances, but only their physical laws. For example: hats remain hats, but suddenly they have the ability to fly. The transference from the laws of visible reality to the laws of the film celluloid is nowhere so obvious as in trick work. It is no accident that the film discovered tricks very early; through them it can freely enjoy the pure playfulness of the film. But from these merely playful possibilities the film developed the potentiality of rendering psychological events photographically, even to the extent of abandoning the rational entirely (as in the surrealist films).

These technical refinements of the film can create the most 'artistic', 'poetic' or 'musical' effects. And thus the film can develop into an art through its technique.



Tricks in the Fiction Film

Abolition of natural laws



Inanimate objects move



Aspects of the world are transformed



Solid bodies are penetrated

Intention: play and rhythm
imagination and dream
phantasy and fairy-tale

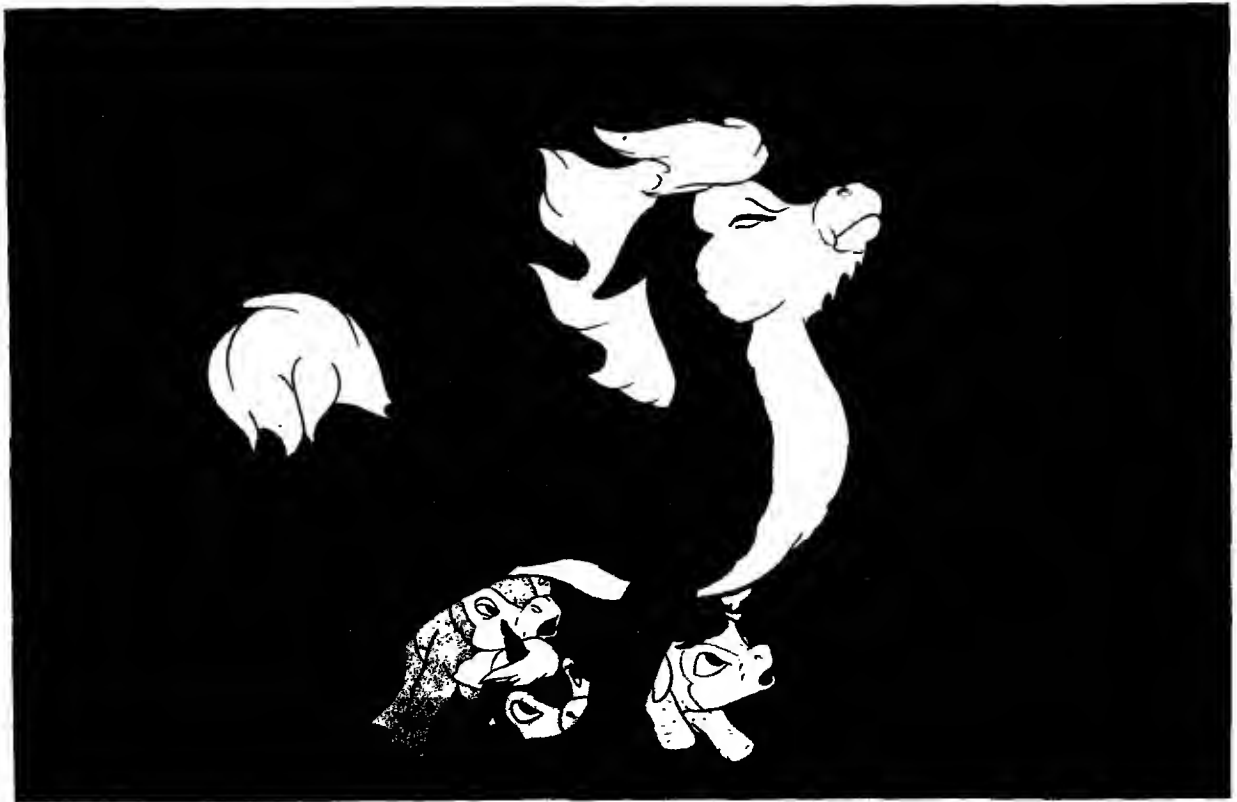
ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Animated Film

The Popular Animated Film

The animated film has nothing to do with tricks in the live-action film. It is not related at all to the live-action film, since it does not photograph external reality but creates a new reality graphically. When it attempts to reproduce reality 'naturalistically' it is artistically insupportable. This danger is least in the pure black-and-white animated film because of the latter's innate abstraction. It is greatest in the animated film with sound and colour, where it is able to come much closer to visible reality by its pictorial means. In the animated film abstraction is not only a technical necessity, but — because of its capacity for naturalism — an artistic and stylistic necessity.

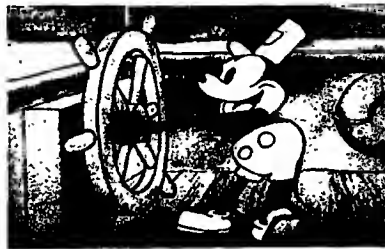


The Popular Animated Film

The animated film is not a copy of reality:
it obeys its own laws



Animated film, black-and-white



Animated film, half-tone



Animated film, coloured

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

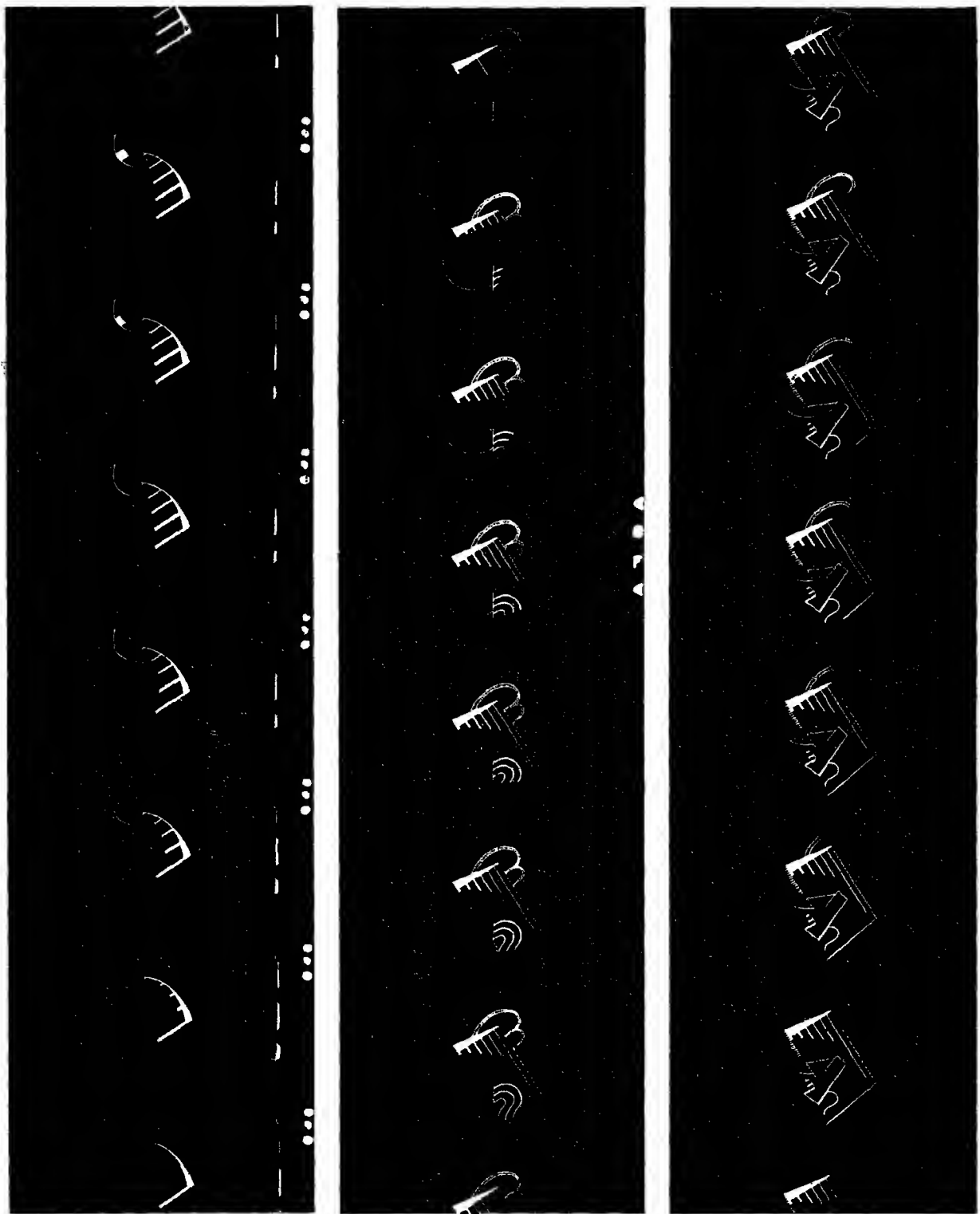
The Film Picture

The Animated Film

The Abstract Film

The abstract film works by graphic means or with light. Among the work of the different authors of abstract films (Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Walter Ruttmann, Hans Richter, Oscar Fischinger) the 'Diagonal Symphony' of the Swedish painter Viking Eggeling (1880—1925) is the most perfect.

Walt Disney's film illustration of Bach in 'Fantasia' is a very problematic example because of its indecisive use of both abstraction and naturalism.



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Film Picture in the History of the Film

The history of the film picture is the history of the film. It cannot be presented in a few words. One should mention here all the great film directors, some important cameramen, and the best films in the history of the cinema.

Until 1910–15 the film had not evolved as a picture art. It hardly knew its own methods. The camera stood in its place, unmoving and unparticipating, and passively caught even the most violent movement.

Around 1910 there appeared — in the 'art film', with the developing artistic self-confidence of the film — the photographed stage picture, and thus the birth of the true film picture was impeded.

By 1915 D. W. Griffith had developed the moving camera, that is the camera set-up as an elastic means of expression. Now the camera began to move around objects, photographing them from all sides, accompanying events, following them, avoiding them, and so forth.

Montage and the close-up make their appearance very early. The great Russian directors first began in the twenties to use them as a decisive method of expression in the film.

In the period from 1923 to 1929, the classical period of the silent film, the better European productions developed an extraordinary film picture discipline. The innovations of the Russian, the German and French avant-garde films, as well as the first British documentaries became common artistic property.

The sound film caused a catastrophe. Dialogue depreciates the film picture and over-emphasizes the film actor. The level suddenly declined. Mass production utilized such film innovations as the close-up, montage, tricks, etc., but it banalized them, in that it either did not exploit them at all or merely repeated them to death. Very few film directors differentiated them, developed them further, combined them with the new laws of the sound film.

The Film Picture in the History of the Film

Until 1915

Sensation of photographed movement
Sensation of film tricks
Unmoving camera



By 1915

D. W. Griffith develops the moving camera



After 1923

The Russians developed the close-up and montage into the most important means of expression of film art



1923—1929

Classical period of the silent film
Avant-garde film in various European countries



Since 1930

Mass production utilizes the innovations and banalizes them

Some important artists differentiate them



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Film does not stand alone!

The film is not only part of the economical and social, but also of the artistic scene. It has its preliminaries and its parallels in all other arts, primarily in the visual arts: theatre, painting and photography.

Film and Modern Theatre

The closeness of the 'naturalistic' theatre at the end of the last century to the film, which was invented at the same time, has already been mentioned several times. Since then the modern, avant-garde theatre has developed away from the film, that is away from the *milieu* and toward realistic or idealized stylization; meanwhile the film has taken over the *milieu*. But at the same time the theatre has drawn towards the film: the modern theatre uses the pictorial element and even picture movement much more than the theatre of 1900 or, more obviously, that of 1800. The stage itself became mobile; the scenery began to move. The static five acts, by which the classical drama had stood, were abandoned in favour of a romantic, epic or film-like kind of continuity. Frequently the scene change on an open stage replaced the interval, a certain acceptance of film-montage. The spot-light intervened emphatically in the play. The actor is no longer paramount; he is object, and material for the theatrical picture language.

Film and Modern Theatre

The modern theatre



develops in its style: away from the film
away from the *milieu*
toward realistic or idealized stylization

in its means: toward the film
The stage itself adopts movement: flexible stage
flexible scenery
The spotlight has an expressive function
Abandonment of the static principle of the five acts

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Film does not stand alone!

Film and Modern Painting

Just as it has its place in the history of the theatre, so the film also has its place in the history of the fine arts. From whatever aspect one may examine the film, it is always obvious that it *had* to come.

Around 1870 impressionism brought movement into painting. It ended at the moment when the pictorial presentation of movement could be achieved in a technical way, that is when the film was invented.

In the early expressionism of Van Gogh, Munch, Toulouse-Lautrec, Bonnard, Vuillard and others one frequently encounters angles of perception that have something definitely 'film-like' about them. Of course there is no direct influence of one medium on the other, but one cannot overlook a general relation in style. The 'set-up' is strikingly employed in early expressionist painting.

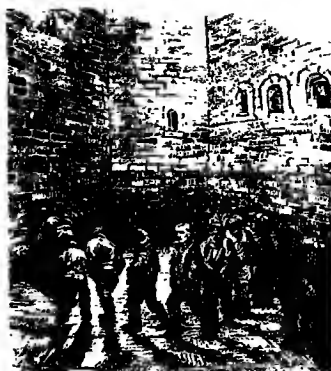
In cubism, futurism and dadaism, the montage (collage) is a passionate game and at the same time a formal self-education. A whole generation of artists went to work with scissors, cut whole newspapers, photographs, wall-papers, matchboxes and other things to paste together for pictures. The effect on the film is direct: many of the film avant-gardists made picture montages first for themselves. The juxtaposition of materials above and alongside each other in graphic montage becomes a juxtaposition in time in film montage.

The so-called 'neo-objectivism' (since 1920) discovered, together with photography, the magic of inanimate objects. The 'photographic' itself becomes a style in painting; it also appears in this manner in the work of some surrealist painters.

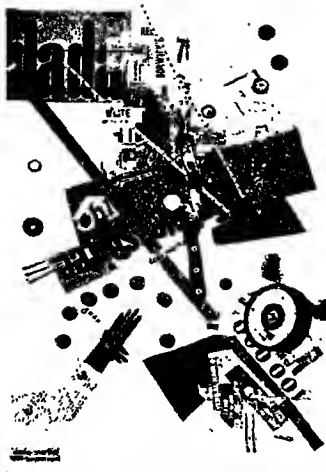
Surrealism — in principle similar to the film — creates invisible reality (or also invisible unreality) by means of visible reality, which means naturalism. It has its direct parallel in the surrealist film.

Film and Modern Painting

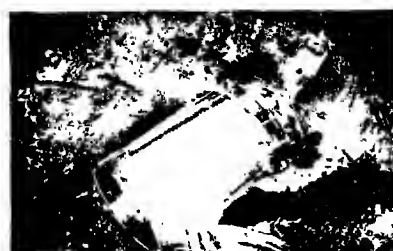
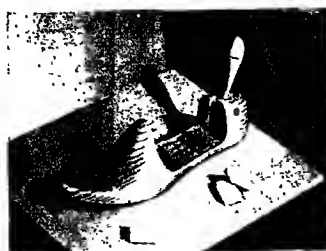
Film-like compositions



Montage



Magic of inanimate objects



The invisible conveyed by means of visible reality (surrealism)



ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The Film Picture

The Film does not stand alone!

Film and Modern Photography

Still photography is the step directly preliminary to the film. In the 'twenties the trend of modern photography, the 'new photography', revolted against the traditional conception of photographic technique limited by the academic rules and prohibitions. The angle of view was freed and thus became the most essential means of expression of still photography. Light and shadow, the basic facts of all photography, were recognized as such, were confirmed and artistically exploited. Photography became the enthusiastic discoverer of the 'magic of inanimate objects'. Photomontage, superimposition, double exposure and all other possible photographic experiments that were important in the avant-garde film characterized the 'new photography'.

Film and Modern Photography

Photography was preliminary to the film, and influenced it.

Traditional photography



only horizontal viewpoint in relation
to object

'new photography'



free angle of viewpoint
light as the basic element of
photography
magic of inanimate objects



close-up



photomontage



experiments

DISTRIBUTION AND EXHIBITION

Distribution

After the artistic production of the film is completed the film is ready for distribution and finally for exhibition. Now it must prove whether it is fit or unfit as merchandise: whether it pleases — whether it is profitable.

Between 1905 and 1910, as a result of increasing production, i. e. as a result of the increasing supply of films, the direct sale of films was replaced by intermediate sale. The concentration of film production in a few towns, and the mushroom-like growth of stable cinemas in all the countries of the world brought a rapid increase in the number of independent film dealers.

In order to secure a more permanent part of the film profits, the film producer, in view of the steadily increasing production costs, replaced direct sale by the rental of films by about 1910.

The next step was that producers with large capital resources encroached upon distribution (and the film theatres). Distributors hitherto independent therefore became agents for the film companies. This phenomenon is not restricted to the film; one can observe it in other industries also; e. g. every large shoe factory has its own retail stores; the shoe dealer, previously independent, now becomes the employed manager of a branch store.

Distribution

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Around 1900 | Direct sale of films from the producer to picture theatres (travelling cinemas) |
| 1905/10 | Beginning of independent film dealing The producer sells the film to the dealer The dealer sells the film to the exhibitor |
| By 1910 | Beginning of independent film distribution The producer sells the film to the distributor The distributor rents the film to the exhibitor |
| Already since 1910 | Encroachment on distribution by the producer Independent distribution becomes a dependent branch of the production company |

DISTRIBUTION AND EXHIBITION

Blind Booking and Block Booking

With the increasing capital needs of film production, certain distribution methods developed, among which in particular were blind booking and block booking. Because of this the theatre owner's free selection of films is very restricted, and he runs the danger of contracting for more films than he will be able to afford.

That such practices are not beneficial to the standard of film production is self-evident.

Blind Booking and Block Booking

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| The producers | frequently do not have the necessary capital for the film production They make the distributors give them credit for the capital that is lacking | |
| The distributors | split the risk involved among the exhibitors and in this way rent the films before or during production | |
| The exhibitors | are therefore often forced to rent films that they cannot see in advance or are forced to rent an entire series of films among which there may be, in addition to the attractive films, less attractive ones | = blind booking = block booking |

Blind booking and block booking are results of the high capital needs of production
They split the risk and secure the sale

Limitation of the Circulation Time of a Film

A film may be very good, but after five years it has to disappear from general consumption. So wills the Moloch film industry. And it accomplishes this in a reckless way; after five years the copies are destroyed. This is done regardless of whether it is an average mass product or a film work of art of the highest rank. Re-showings of old films are thought undesirable and only become possible with great difficulty. The reason for this evil lies ultimately in the fact that the film is not sold but only distributed. One cannot buy a film that is out of circulation as one can buy another work of art, for it goes back to the producer, who, as the owner of the film, has the right to destroy it.

As a matter of fact there is also limitation of circulation time in other fields of contemporary production. Thus the lifetime of all fashion articles (clothing, hats, shoes) is artificially shortened by the poor quality of the material employed and 'dernier cri' propaganda, in order to free the market for new products.

Other works of art and cultural documents are preserved in museums and private collections, but films have to be destroyed after a few years. Because of this culturally fatal situation film archives have been set up in various countries to preserve prints of the most important films that have been withdrawn from circulation. When these films can no longer be exploited commercially, they can still serve to educate students of film art, as well as for scientific analysis of the film and for the purposes of history, sociology, psychology and natural science. The more the film progresses, and the more it reveals its specific film history, the greater becomes the importance of these scientific film institutes.

Limitation of the Circulation Time of a Film

To keep the market eager to consume the circulation time of a film must be limited

After five years the copies are normally taken out of circulation and destroyed

so that the need for new merchandise is constantly present

so that newly produced films find a continuous market

so that the expensive production machine can work continuously

Only because the film is merchandise in its contemporary economic structure
is this reckless destruction of film works of art possible

The film archives in the different countries

collect films taken out of distribution as artistic
 historical
 sociological
 psychological
 natural scientific documents

Exhibition: The Cinema Theatre

In a few decades luxurious cinemas developed from the primitive fairground theatres. While the travelling cinema offered amusement only for the lower classes of the population, the modern cinema offers amusement for the whole population. To get the upper middle class accustomed to going to the theatres and to becoming consumers of the commercial film, balconies are built above the stalls. At the same time comfort increased, not only effective comfort (good seats, good acoustics, ventilation, air conditioning, etc.) but also imaginative comfort, interior decoration. So the film went the opposite way from that of most other industrial products — (the car, the refrigerator, the vacuum cleaner), it moved not from above to below but from below to above; the 'nickel-odeon' became the Picture Palace. The decorative style of the picture palace, more highly established socially, reflects glamorous bombast and pseudo-historical splendour, although a clean modern architecture would correspond to the real character of the film.

In addition to the cinema theatres established in the towns, the film is also advancing into more and more remote places, in the form of small static cinemas or mobile cinemas. The rapid advance of the sub-standard film in recent years was of great importance in this respect.

Exhibition: The Cinema Theatre

Until 1906

The travelling cinema



primitive fairground theatre
continuous change of location
cheap admission

After 1906

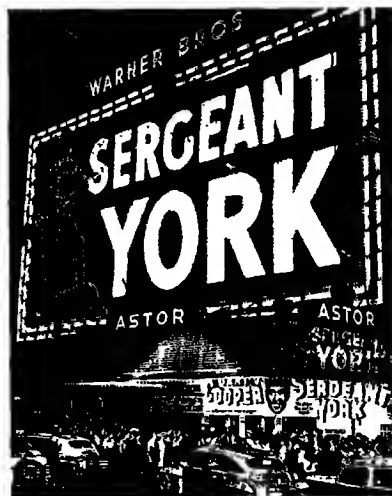
The permanent cinema theatre



in stores and cafés
no change of location
continuous change of public;
rapid change of programme
cheap admission

From 1910 to the present time

Development toward
the modern picture palace



longer programmes;
fewer performances a day
little change of public;
larger seating capacity
increasing comfort
increase and differentiation of
admission prices

Increasing specialization of the cinema theatres:

Distinction between first-run theatres and second-run theatres

Specialization in definite types of films

Substitute for Reality!

Properly speaking one should assume — and perhaps the naïve film-goer does assume it — that all this technical, financial and artistic effort occurs exclusively for the benefit of the film-goer, the consumer of the merchandise 'film'. That this is not the case and why this is not the case has been thoroughly demonstrated.

A good deal of responsibility for the standard of the film as it is today must be borne by the film-goer himself, or rather by the social conditions in which the great mass of film-goers find themselves, and from which definite psychological attitudes in the individual result. Therefore one cannot speak of guilt in an ethical sense, since this assumes the possibility of a freely responsible decision. But whoever has spiritual freedom from the psychological pressure of his social conditions is also free from the pressure the film production exerts on him.

An occasional flight from reality, a temporary forgetfulness of their normal life, is for most people an urgent need. The pseudo-reality of the film offers an illusory satisfaction for their repressed social and erotic desires. But the illusion passes rapidly, and afterwards the disillusion caused by real life imposes itself with double strength.

Substitute for Reality!

In the entire world over 1,100,000,000 admissions to the cinema take place yearly

What do audiences want?

Substitute for reality!

Reality is difficult and unsatisfying

Thanks to its illusion of reality
the film can effectively falsify reality



THE FILM-GOER

Relaxation!

Just as one goes for a walk on Sundays, so one likes occasionally to go to a movie in the evening; there is nothing wrong with this. There one finds reality and pseudo-reality, as well as amusement. Now real amusement is in a very special way close to reality, filled with reality. It does not criticize reality, nor does it deceive itself with pseudo-reality. It takes reality as it is, and here and there, in a playful way, exposes its innermost rules.

Relaxation

In the entire world over 1,100,000,000 admissions to the cinema take place yearly

What do audiences want?

Relaxation!

Reality is difficult and unsatisfying

Thanks to its illusion of reality
the film can play with reality in a relaxing way



Reality!

It may be impossible to master reality physically in many cases. But it is possible, even though it is difficult, to master it intellectually, i.e. to recognize why it is as it is and to deduce consequences from this recognition. Flight from reality is easy but self-deceiving. Play is happy. To recognize the truth, to acknowledge the truth is an essential need for the intellectually free man; he may be bound socially, but it is precisely then that intellectual freedom is vitally important.

Thanks to its intense illusion of reality, the film is able to master reality effectively, both intellectually and artistically; to show it could be as it should be, were it not as it is! And, as no other art can, it could transmit to the whole world the truth that its economic condition depends on the conception of internationality. For its language, the picture, is the language of the whole world.

Reality!

In the entire world over 1,100,000,000 admissions to the cinema take place yearly

What do audiences want?

Reality!

Reality is difficult and unsatisfying

Thanks to its illusion of reality
the film can effectively master reality



The Passive Film-Goer

The problem of 'the film as it ought to be' cannot be solved by placing the full responsibility one way or another. Certainly the wishful dreaming of the passive film-goer is exploited by the film producer — but why does the film-goer permit himself to be controlled by his wishful dreaming? And the film producer certainly forces the film-goer to consume the films as they are — but they please the film-goer as they are. So: Who is forcing whom? Who is forced by whom?

Everyone is under the pressure of his socio-economic conditions. To the film producer this means profit and power; therefore he endeavours to keep it static. But to the film-goer it means that reality is hard and unsatisfying; therefore he endeavours to free himself from it. As soon as he can successfully free himself, not for two hours only, but permanently — if not materially yet intellectually — then he will take a stand against reality. Then he will no longer passively permit his weaknesses to be exploited, nor permit himself to be controlled by his wishful dreaming. Then the passive film-goer will become an active one.

The Passive Film-Goer

The passive film-goer is

controlled by his wishful dreaming
exploited in his wishful dreaming

Today the film-goer is

the slave of film production:

he is forced
to consume
what is produced

the tyrant over film production:

he forces it
to produce
what pleases him

the film-producer is

the tyrant over the film-goer:

he forces him
to consume
what he produces

the slave of the film-goer:

he is forced
to produce
what pleases the film-goer

THE FILM-GOER

The Active Film-Goer

If there were a sufficiently large number of active film-goers choosing their films in freedom from the blind pressure of their social conditions because they had seen through the economic mechanism of the film (as they had seen through their own economic and social conditions), they would be strong enough to force the film industry to stop the mass production of substitute for reality.

The Active Film-Goer

The active film-goer

endeavours

actively to develop his opinion

actively to develop his will

fights

the bad film

fights for

the good film

The independent press

is one of the most important instruments for developing active opinions

The film-goers' organizations

are one of the most important instruments for developing an active will

THE AIM

The Aim

The aim, stated simply, is the good and true film in the service of mankind. The film is still far away from fulfilling this aim; but we have to open the way towards fulfilling it.

Film production as profit production, which means as production for profit on invested capital, chains the film as an art.

Film production as production for need, which means as production not for the undominated needs of the passive film-goer (who is only the instrument of profit production), but as production for the needs of the active film-goer, needs based on consciously developed opinion and will, would make the film-goer the master of production and the film producer the servant of the film-goer — would free the film as an art.

The authors of this book would like to contribute to the fulfilment of this aim by making the film-goer aware of the great artistic possibilities of the film, as well as of its great socio-economic handicaps.

The Aim

Film production

as production for the profit of the producer (profit production)

chains the film as an art

Film production

as production for the need of the active film-goer (need production)

makes the film-goer the master of production

the producer the servant of the film-goer

frees the film as an art!

Picture Index

The picture index corresponds to the arrangement of the pictures. The system of three vertical columns used throughout the whole book is also used for the arrangement of the index. The position of each mention corresponds, therefore, to the position of the picture related to it. For the large pictures on the left sides (outside the three column system) the index is to be found on the left of the three columns. In general, the name of the film is mentioned, occasionally also the name of the actor; and nearly always the name of the director is added in brackets.

left side

'Modern Times' (Charlie Chaplin)

right side

'Schach dem König'

'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin)

right side

Scene from 'The Weavers'
by Gerhart Hauptmann (Basle City Theatre)

Hans Richter Photo

right side

Dominique Ingres: Portrait of M. Bertin

Photograph by Bentall. 1860

Edouard Manet: Horse Race at Longchamps

'The Western Union' (Fritz Lang)

right side

Medieval church fresco

Hans Holbein the Younger:
Erasmus of Rotterdam

Medieval Miniature book

Hans Holbein the Younger:
Woodcut from the Dance of Death

right side

Eidenbenz Photo

'Mother' (V. I. Pudovkin)

left side

Production shot: 'Sergeant York'
(Howard Hawks)

right side

Eidenbenz Photo

Production shot: Noel Coward directing
(In which we serve)

Vincent van Gogh: Landscape near Saint-Rémy

'Peter the Great' (Petrov)

| | | | | |
|----|------------|--|--|---|
| 9 | right side | Advertising facade of a contemporary American theatre | | |
| 10 | left side | 'The last Chance' (Leopold Lindtberg) | | |
| 11 | left side | 'Mr. Smith goes to Washington' (Frank Capra) | | |
| 11 | right side | 'Louis Pasteur' (William Dieterle) 'Aloma' | | |
| 15 | right side | Loretta Young and Robert Taylor From a Wild West film The cast of a Hardy Family film 'Mrs. Miniver' (William Wyler) | | |
| 16 | right side | Page from the novel 'War and Peace' by Leo Tolstoi | Page from the stage scenario for 'The living Corpse' Page from the film scenario by Richard Schweizer for 'The last Chance' | Scene from 'The living Corpse' (Berne City Theatre) 'The last Chance' (Leopold Lindtberg) |
| 17 | right side | Page from 'Iphigenie' by Goethe Page from 'The Weavers' by Gerhart Hauptmann Page from the scenario by Richard Schweizer for 'The last Chance' | | |
| 18 | right side | 'Faust' (Fritz Murnau) 'Major Barbara' (Gabriel Pascal) | | |
| 21 | right side | Production shot: Alfred Hitchcock directing Production shot: Editing room Production shot: John Ford directing ('The Informer') | | |
| 22 | left side | 'The Good Earth' (Sidney Franklin) | | |
| 22 | right side | 'La Bête Humaine' (Jean Renoir) 'Sous les Toits de Paris' (René Clair) 'Mother' (V. I. Pudovkin) 'La Femme du Boulanger' (Marcel Pagnol) | | |

| | | | |
|----|------------|---|--|
| 23 | left side | 'Sous les Toits de Paris' (René Clair) | |
| 23 | right side | Bette Davis in 'The little Foxes' (William Wyler) 'The Battleship Potemkin' (S. M. Eisenstein) 'No Man's Land' (Victor Trivas) | |
| | | 'The Long Voyage Home' (John Ford) 'Der Kampf der Tertia' (Max Mack) 'Le Jour se lève' (Marcel Carné) | |
| 24 | left side | 'Le Jour se lève' (Marcel Carné) | |
| 24 | right side | Paul Wegener in an old film Jean Gabin in 'La Bête Humaine' (Jean Renoir) 'Earth' (Dovchenko) | |
| 25 | left side | 'Tobacco Road' (John Ford) | |
| 25 | right side | 'In which we serve' (Noel Coward) 'General Line' (S. M. Eisenstein) 'Le Quai des Brumes' (Marcel Carné) 'General Line' (S. M. Eisenstein) | |
| 26 | right side | Kurt Horwitz as Antonio in Goethe's 'Tasso' (Zurich Playhouse) Karl Paryla as Fedja in Tolstoi's 'The living Corpse' (Zurich Playhouse) 'The Grapes of Wrath' (John Ford) | Scene from 'Oedipus the King' by Sophokles (Basle City Theatre) Scene from 'The Rats' by Gerhart Hauptmann (Zurich Playhouse) 'The last Days of St. Petersburg' (S. M. Eisenstein) |
| 27 | left side | Catherine Hessling in 'En Rade' (Alberto Cavalcanti) | |
| 27 | right side | From an old film Sarah Bernhardt in 'Queen Elizabeth' Charlie Chaplin in 'The Vagabond' Douglas Fairbanks Sr. in 'Robin Hood' | |
| 28 | right side | Marlene Dietrich in 'Manpower' (Raoul Walsh) Errol Flynn in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' (Michael Curtiz) From a Wild West Film From a Musical Revue Film | |
| 29 | left side | Michel Simon in 'Le Quai des Brumes' (Marcel Carné) | |

29 right side

Greta Garbo
Corinne Luchaire in 'Prisons sans Barreaux'

30 right side

'Fest der Völker'
'Fest der Völker'
'Neurose' (Wow and Zitch)
'The Vampyre' (Carl Dreyer)

31 right side

Scene from 'The merry Wives of Windsor'
by Shakespcare (Basle City Theatre)
'Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe'
(Hans Trommler)
'Le Quai des Brumes' (Marcel Carné)

32 left side

Production shot:
'The Hunchback of Notre-Dame'
(William Dieterle)

32 right side

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| | From a film by Georges Méliès | |
| | 'Ben Hur' (Fred Niblo) | |
| | 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' (Robert Wiener) | |
| 'Major Barbara' (Gabriel Pascal) | 'Gunga Din' (George Stevens) | 'La Règle du Jeu' (Jean Renoir) |

33 left side

'Le jour se lève' (Marcel Carné)

33 right side

| | | |
|--|-----------------|---|
| | Production shot | Production shot |
| | | 'Que viva Mexico' (S.M. Eisenstein and G. Alexandroff) |

34 right side

'Rebecca' (Alfred Hitchcock)

35 left side

'In which we serve' (Noel Coward)

35 right side

Eidenbenz Photo
Thomas Mitchell in 'The Long Voyage Home'
(John Ford)

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | Silvia Sidney |
| | | Marguerite Moreno in 'Regain' (Marcel Pagnol) |
| Harry Baur in 'Les Misérables' | Harry Baur in 'Les Misérables' | Harry Baur in 'Les Misérables' |

| | | | |
|----|------------|---|---|
| 36 | left side | | |
| | | 'Dead End' (William Wyler) | |
| 36 | right side | | |
| | | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) |
| | | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) |
| | | 'M.' 'A City seeks a Murderer' (Fritz Lang) | |
| | | 'Symphonic einer Großstadt' (Walter Ruttmann) | |
| | | | 'General Line' (S.M. Eisenstein) |
| 37 | right side | | |
| | | | 'Le Quai des Brumes' (Marcel Carné) |
| | | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) |
| | | | From an American Film |
| | | | 'M.' 'A City seeks a Murderer' (Fritz Lang) |
| 38 | left side | | |
| | | 'The 13' (Michail Romm) | |
| 38 | right side | | |
| | | | 'Enthusiasin' (Dziga-Vertoff) |
| | | | 'The Vampyre' (Carl Dreyer) |
| | | | 'Le Quai des Brumes' (Marcel Carné) |
| | | | 'M.' 'A City seeks a Murderer' (Fritz Lang) |
| 39 | right side | | |
| | | | 'Der Kampf der Tertia' (Max Mack) |
| | | | 'Man with Camera' (Dziga-Vertoff) |
| 40 | right side | | |
| | | Production shor | |
| | | 'Rennsymphonie' (Hans Richter) | |
| 41 | right side | | |
| | | 'La Règle du Jeu' (Jean Renoir) | |
| | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) | |
| 42 | right side | | |
| | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) | 'Entr'acte' (René Clair) |
| 43 | right side | | |
| | | 'October' (S.M. Eisenstein) | |
| 44 | right side | | |
| | | 'The Saboteur' (Alfred Hitchcock) | |
| 45 | right side | | |
| | | 'Mother' (V.I. Pudovkin) | |
| 46 | left side | | |
| | | From a film by Georges Méliès | |

46 right side

,Vormittagsspuk' (Hans Richter)
'Entr'acte' (René Clair)
'The Student of Prague'

47 left side

'Fantasia' (Walt Disney)

47 right side

Felix the Cat (Walt Disney)
Mickey Mouse (Walt Disney)
'Snow-White' (Walt Disney)

48 right side

'Diagonal Symphony' (Viking Eggeling)

49 right side

From an old film
'Birth of a Nation' (D. W. Griffith)
'General Line' (S. M. Eisenstein)
'Le Sang d'un Poète' (Jean Cocteau)
'La Femme du Boulanger' (Marcel Pagnol)

50 right side

Scene from 'The Merchant of Berlin'
(Stage design by L. Moholy-Nagy)

51 right side

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Vincent Van Gogh: Prison Yard | 'Mother' (V. I. Pudovkin) |
| John Hartfield: Collage | 'Man with Camera' (Dziga-Vertoff) |
| Niklaus Stöcklin: Shoe tree | 'Mother' (V. I. Pudovkin) |
| Salvador Dali: | 'L'Age d'Or' (Salvador Dali) |
| The Weaning of the Furniture-Nutrition | |

52 right side

Eidenbeuz Photo
Eidenbenz Photo
Man Ray Photo
Photomontage by John Hartfield
Blumenfeld Photo

56 right side

Old tent Cinema, Switzerland
Old Cinema Theatre, Basle
Modern Cinema Theatre, New York

57 right side

'The Mark of Zorro'

58 right side

'Gold Rush' (Charlie Chaplin)

59 right side

'The Grapes of Wrath' (John Ford)

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